

Lessons From the Pit

by Teresa Conlon

The sermon teaches that the pit in Joseph's life represents a place of separation and sifting where God deals with our pride and self, and that through humility and faith, we can respond to God and see the truth, even in difficult circumstances.

Duration: 48:28

Scripture: Genesis 39:9, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Joseph"

Description

The sermon is titled 'Lessons from the Pit' and the speaker begins by praying for guidance and understanding from the Holy Spirit. The message focuses on the story of Joseph from the Bible, specifically the part where his brothers plot to kill him but instead throw him into a pit. The speaker explains that this pit represents a place of dealing and humbling where God puts those who need to come to the end of themselves and learn to rely on Him. The sermon emphasizes the importance of being humble and open to God's truth, even when facing difficult circumstances.

Transcript

This is one of the Times Square Church pulpit series. It was recorded in the sanctuary of Times Square Church in Manhattan, New York City. You are welcome to make additional cassettes of this message for free distribution to friends.

However, for all other forms of reproduction or electronic transmission, existing copyright laws apply. Praise the Lord. Many of you I know are coming in the prayer time between the services, and it's proving to be such a time of blessing, and I would ask to put one more thing on your prayer calendar, and that is if you would remember to pray for me the last two weeks of September.

I have the privilege of ministering in two Italian cities to Catholic women. In one place in Sicily, over a thousand Catholic women will be there, and I am just trusting God for great things, and for him to be able to just move upon the hearts of those precious women. Many of them are poor.

Many of them are going to be hearing for the first time about the gospel. So if you would just keep me in your prayers the last two weekends, and then I will join the team in Nigeria, and we're looking forward to two great pastors' conferences, one in Abuja and the other in Ajaw, where the great crusades will be in the night. So we never tire of asking you to pray, because as we heard this morning, God does so much with

our small prayers, and so we are just going to keep pressing in and believe in God, because we serve a God with whom there is nothing impossible, and I thank him that he can take, amen, the foolish one, just that his glory is brighter and sweeter and greater and causes hope.

So I just thank you for your prayers. Today, if you would turn with me to Genesis chapter 37. Genesis 37.

First book of the Bible. My message this afternoon is called Lessons from the Pit. Lessons from the Pit.

Father, I come to you in Jesus' name, and I pray, O God, that you would come, Holy Spirit, and, Lord, you would lead us into the heart of this message, that, Lord, your Spirit would come and reveal and teach us this great truth. Lord, I frankly acknowledge I need you, and, Lord, I pray we need you, God, not just to be hearers of your word, but to be doers of this word. Lord, there is so much life in your word.

I pray, O God, that we would open to it, and, Lord, that you would give us the power to walk in its incredible light. So, Lord, we trust you with this message, and I trust you, O God, to touch the ears and the hearts of all who will hear it, as I trust you, O God, to lead me forward, to preach this under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, to give all the glory to you, Jesus, and, Father, because you deserve it all, and we'll thank you for it in Jesus' name. Amen.

I want to speak this afternoon to you about the life of Joseph and what his life means to us today. And we get the advantage, we have the great advantage when we study a life in the Bible, is we get to see from the beginning and the end. We get to see the whole life in completion.

And when the Holy Spirit puts that life together before us, we begin to see things, because we have the benefit of seeing if the path they started, if a man called by God, touched by God, if he's able to finish his course, what is his life able to accomplish? What is the end result of that life? And we get to have that with the life of Joseph. But today, I really want to talk about when Joseph went into a pit. I want to talk about what does that pit, what is that type? What does that pit mean for you and for me? What did that mean in the life of Joseph? You see, Joseph was one of Jacob's 12 sons.

And we heard so powerfully this morning, Jacob in the lineage of blessing, where God started with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And as most of you know, Jacob had 12 sons. And the birthright and the blessing did not go to the oldest boy, Reuben, who lived in immorality.

But it fell to this son, Joseph. And Joseph is a type, Joseph is a type of a man or a woman that has the kind of faith that separates and singles them out from their generation. It's a type of person that the touch of God is on their life.

God touches your life and you respond to it. And with that touch comes a call. And you don't turn a deaf ear to it.

But you see, Joseph, in receiving that call, had to bear the envy and the hatred of religious brethren. And Joseph had a dream. And in that dream, he dreamt.

And he saw in the harvest field that his sheaf that represented him stood tall and 11 others, his brothers, all bowed down to him. And when he told that dream to his brothers, they were infuriated with him. They hated him before because in their eyes, he was more loved.

But when he had that dream, their envy increased. And then he had a second dream. And in it, he saw the sun and the moon and 11 stars bowing down to him.

And beloved, this is a type, it is a foreshadowing of the spiritual dominion that his life and his faith would exercise over every other unspiritual man and woman. It's a foreshadowing and a type of a man called and touched by God who responds. And in that responding and in that abandoning himself to God, he ends up at the end of his life with a spiritual authority where his type of faith, others are forced to acknowledge at the end that his faith, his walk, his responding to God was able to lift him up higher into a walk with God, into a faith that the others did not possess.

Now, the scripture tells us that Joseph, before he went into the pit and when he, after he shared these dreams, it tells us in verse 37, verse 2, the last line of that. And Joseph brought unto his father their evil report. You see, Joseph was out in the field with his brethren, and he ends up getting mixed up in the spirit upon these men.

And I have no doubt that when he began to share these visions and begin to ponder in his heart what it was that God was saying to him, that a source of pride, which is the scourge of the religious, a pride that grips my heart and grips your heart, a pride that wants to get in all those that are called by God, that wants to come in and build a secret life and have the secret ambitions, and begin to look around, begin to categorize men and women, begin to operate in a pride where it loves to hear its name praised, love to see and hear of its accomplishments. And the scripture tells us clearly that Joseph, mixing with his brethren, begins to partake of this evil report. But beloved, God has his hand on this man, and he does what he does not do with the other men.

He separates them, and he puts them in a pit, a place of separating and sifting, a place where you don't want to be, because it's where we come face to face with ourselves. See, the story tells us in Genesis that he was sent out to look for his brothers, and when he finds them, when he's still a long way off, they go, here comes that dreamer. See, they will all partake of stories, but they themselves understand there's something different about this man, and it bothers them.

And they said, well, they plot to kill him, but in the end, through the intervention of one compassionate older brother, they decide not to kill him. They throw him in a pit where there is no water and where it's empty. And the Holy Spirit began to show me, he wanted me to stop there, and he said, Teresa, this pit is no ordinary pit.

This pit is a place. It's a type of dealing. This pit is a type of dealing where God puts those that he's calling to, of those that he are going to come to the end of themselves and are going to be able to look away from themselves after they go through the dealing of God.

He puts men and women who are going to have the humbleness of heart to realize truth when God speaks it. He puts them in a pit. And when he does that, extraordinary men and women come out of that pit.

Now, I want to show you that in Joseph's life. Because when Joseph is taken out of that pit, I want to fast forward and go through his life very quickly. And we can see the fruit of what happens when God puts a called, a chosen man and woman in his pit, a place of dealing.

In Genesis 39, chapter 39, verses 2 and 3, we pick up the story of Joseph, where he was taken out of that pit. And it tells us in verse 2 that the Lord was with Joseph. You see, when Joseph was taken out of the pit, he was taken as a slave into the household of Potiphar, which was an officer of Pharaoh.

And he's made a slave in Potiphar, the Sagistian household. And verse 2 says, and the Lord was with Joseph. And he was a prosperous man.

And he was in the house of his master, the Egyptian. In verse 3, and his master saw that the Lord was with him. And that the Lord made all that he, Joseph, did to prosper in his hand.

Scripture is very clear. When this man came out of the pit, that the Lord was with him. And Joseph knew it.

The Lord was with him and he was a prosperous man. You see, when he left the pit, he left with something. And his master saw that the Lord was with him.

This is not, you know, there are times God does a secret thing in our heart and it's like something that we share. But then there comes a time where there is an abiding anointing upon us that people can see it. There is a radiance, there is a deep-seated peace.

There is a joy in spite of a surface pain. There is something that they recognize, I don't have. And this Egyptian, though he the master saw something, that the Lord was with him and there was a prosperity on him.

This man was set apart. And all he did, he did well. And there was a clear thinking on Joseph.

There was a decisiveness. There was a clarity of thought. There was a clarity in his heart.

And it was evident to all that could see this man. Now he's brought into Egypt and he's surrounded by the language of Egypt and the customs of Egypt. Here now is a God-called-out man.

A man that God can put his spirit upon in a very evident way. And God sends him right into the heart, the hotbed of temptation. The hotbed of the world.

God sends a prepared man right into the heart of Egypt. And he has to learn a new language, the Egyptian language. He has to learn the new customs.

And in surrounding that new language and that new customs, and you and I know that Egypt is always a typology of the world, of a fallen humanity, where sin and pride and self are masters. And he goes into this world, a man with an evident anointing. And as he learns the language of Egypt and the customs of Egypt, he would hear all around him how the knowledge of man is constantly exalted over the knowledge of God.

There would be such a contempt for a simple faith. He's put into a place where the pride of man, the competition, the boasting, the comparing, the exalting of one with another would be the order of the day. He'd be in a place where covetousness and greedy-hearted and the hard-hearted is how the marketplace operated.

And this man comes into that place. But most of all, he's put into a temptation where he actually lived. He's put in where his home becomes the place of his strongest temptations.

God puts him in a place where he dwells, is where he fights his biggest battle. And the scripture tells us that a sensual voice, the voice of the wife of Potiphar, comes to him and speaks to him and she says, lie with me. She's the voice of Egypt.

And she's saying to this man, lie with me. Come, compromise. Make an allegiance with me.

Let us be one. Lie with me. I could hear her say, you should because you know you're a slave.

You're a nobody. What future have you, a slave, in this house? Give in to the pleasure. Why should you deny yourself? You have no pleasures around you.

Why deny yourself? Lie with me. Give in to me. And in Genesis 39 verse 9, scripture records Joseph's answer.

And he tells her at the last verse, how can I do this great wickedness and sin against God? How can I do this? I am little in your sight, but I am chosen in God's sight. And in verse 10, it talks about an unrelenting temptation where the temptation is not a one-time thing, but where it is a day in, day out, hounding kind of temptation. This man is in the middle of a foreign culture.

He knows he's in a foreign land, but the temptations pull on him all the time. Was it easy? Was it something that he could lightly turn away from? When the voice of Egypt is calling to him at every place and at his place of weakness, an unrelenting temptation day in, day out. And yet it tells us in verse 10, and it came to pass as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her or to be with her.

And here we see this man not only refusing her offer of sexual sin, but he even refuses in any way to be with her. At every opportunity, he separates himself from her. And I've got to thinking, this man who can withstand such an assault, what had he learned in that pit? You know, the Scripture goes on to tell us his story, how when she was spurned, she falsely accused Joseph and he is thrown in prison.

And here he is falsely lied against, maligned, lied against. And he finds himself in a prison. Why not a massive pity party? Why not at that point, God, everything within me to withstand this temptation and God, I trusted you and you were faithful to me.

But now a prison, is this the reward? Why not a massive pity party? Why not a harboring resentment and a growing distrust and content with the ways of God? Against the God whom he surrendered himself to and now seems to find himself in a deeper place. And yet the Scripture tells us, when Joseph finds himself in this place in Genesis 39 verse 20, it tells us that the pit had opened Joseph's eyes. Verse 20, it says, and Joseph's master took him and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound.

And he was there in prison. And God opened his eyes and able to show him, Joseph, I'm taking you from one place of appointment where you were able to withstand the assaults you never thought possible. And now I put you into a prison, but I'm going to open your eyes and you're going to see it's the king's prison.

You're going to see this is another God appointed place. And the Scripture tells us in verse 21, and the Lord was with Joseph and showed him mercy and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. And I'm beginning to see this abiding, sustained presence and favor of God in his life like I have rarely seen it.

This man is in a prison and yet his eyes are open to see the mercy of God in that place. This man is in a prison and yet his heart is wide open. And because of it, he receives the favor of God in prison.

And I'm beginning to see an anointing and a favor on this man like I had never seen it before. I saw a man before the pit where his very own brethren could lead him astray, deposit evil reports in his heart, and he takes on the press and imprint of them. But I see a man that God puts down into a pit and comes out and is able to withstand Egypt, is able not to doubt God in a prison, has his eyes open to see that this is God's prison and it's for a place and there's comfort.

And even though there's no explanation, there's something better. There's God's mercy there. There's God's, the Scripture says, His favor is there.

I begin to say, God, why did Joseph have your sustained presence and favor? Who is the man God's hand is on in prison? What kind of man is a man that God's hand is in the middle of persecution, in the middle of that kind of trial? And I got to think, what did this man know? And where did he learn it? Then the Scripture tells us as we fast forward his story that while in prison, he interprets the dreams of fellow prisoners and one is freed to Farris Court. Joseph looks at him and says, when you stand before Pharaoh, remember me. And the Scripture tells us clearly that when that man was freed from prison, he promptly forgot Joseph.

Beloved, what turmoil do you and I go, are plunged into when day after day of uninterrupted chains, we realize we have or seemingly have been forgotten. When we go through those long stretches of time, where seemingly God seems deaf to our pleas, where there's no answer to prayer, where sin seems to have the dominion over us. In any kind of prison, but where a place where we feel forgotten and forsaken, a place where we seem abandoned and overlooked.

But beloved, Joseph was in that place where the Scripture tells us, yes, the word of the Lord tried him. But I believe in that trying where Joseph abandoned hope and every promise anyone ever made to him. And said, Lord, that word that you gave me, I'm going to call upon the favor you put here that when I close my eyes and open my heart, Lord, you stir me and you remind me that you are here in this place with me.

And I see Joseph being able to comfort himself and encourage himself knowing he's in the king's prison. And finally, Scripture tells us he is released from prison because Pharaoh also dreams a dream. And Joseph is now brought to the attention of the court because he is a man who understands dreams and visions.

He seemingly is a man who has an understanding of the times that no one else around him does. And it summons him before Pharaoh. And his great moment when he stands there, knowing that Pharaoh needs him, knowing something that is in him, this great nation now comes to a halt till it hears the word from him.

And the first words out of Joseph's mouth as he stands before Pharaoh when he's asked, can you interpret this dream? Joseph says, it is not in me. It is not in me. But he says, God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace.

He's able to interpret the dreams and Pharaoh is able to realize what is the character? What is the caliber of this man that stands before me? So independent of the praise of men. So not needing what we seemingly can offer him. What is this man that stands before and can declare before everyone? What you seek is not in me, but I will tell you what you need.

What kind of man should be for Pharaoh that day? Well, you know, in Genesis 45, the crowning moment of Joseph's life and ministry. And what the pit, the dealing of God, what it produced in his life came to a full flower in Genesis 45. Because when Joseph interprets a dream, he told Pharaoh there's going to be seven years of plenty and then seven years of famine.

He says, we must store up the grain. And Joseph now is a type whose life is not just going to bless a household of faith, but he's a type of a man who's going to bless Egypt. He's got, he has the caliber, he has the faith.

He has something of God so worked in him. He blesses every life that comes in contact with him, believer or non-believer. But in chapter 45, Joseph's crowning achievement of what the pit did in Joseph's life, where he became a leader and nourisher of the household of faith.

He became by his powerful example. When his brethren came to him in great need, he revealed himself to him. I am Joseph.

And then he says, do not be angry and do not fear. God has sent me before you. And it is not you that sent me hither.

It is not you that's brought me to this place. God has brought me to this place. And in bringing me to this place, you, I will nourish you.

You will not come to poverty. And he kissed his brethren and he wept upon them. Beloved, what kind of man is this? That those that betray him and ill-use him have his own household.

Those that he had every right to expect the most and gave him the least. He is able to turn and nourish and sustain and point them by his very presence to a God who had not forgotten them and who would forgive them, who would give them a second chance. But they bowed down to him just like the dream said.

Because something in them recognized something in him they did not have. And all that was bestowed upon Joseph, the wealth, the prestige, the blessing, the understanding, none of it would corrupt him. He would not be corrupted by pride.

That's why he could be humble and long-suffering with his brethren. That is evidence enough. Now, beloved, what do we mean? What do I mean when I say that Joseph went down to the pit? What am I talking about? In practical terms for you and I, we've seen the fruit of the pit.

We've fast-forwarded through this man's life and we have seen evidence of the power of God on this man like you, a man like you, and a man type like me. And yet we've seen the fruit, very different fruit from his life after the pit than before. And I believe that that pit that God will bring every called, every God-touched, every called person, that God's saying that if I want to use you, as small as you think you are, as incapable as you think you are, those that he touches and brings down into that pit, God is going to begin a process, a brokenness.

What went in operating in pride and feeling superior with a natural strength, is going to be broken. And my definition of broken is a very simple one. I feel that a broken man or woman is someone who truly appreciates our own neediness.

Who truly appreciates our own neediness. Brokenness, beloved, starts with humility. Joseph was humbled in the pit.

He heard brothers discussing him. And I believe that finally the light began to dawn what his actions caused and who he was. But beloved, he could start to blame them.

He could start to say, I'm in this pit because of you. But no, no, no. God was coming.

And in the pit, in a natural place of panic and despair. In a place where we have to come face to face of who we are. Where our pride and where we thought we were and what God was going to do in our life in the call of God and the words he spoke all come to nothing.

Where we're put in a place that's empty and without water. And we find in a place in that pit. This, we begin to sense because God's presence is in that pit.

If he, if it's God's pit, his presence is there. And we begin to sense that this journey is going to be about fulfilling the word God gave to us. But something in this pit that's empty with no water has to die.

Something in this pit has to die. Jesus understood the ways of God, beloved. He did not resent or resist the death that the Father had planned for him.

When Jesus said, this is my body which is broken for you. And the devil thought that death was the ultimate defeat. And that's why he thought he engineered the death of Jesus Christ.

But you and I know, New Testament believers, that Christ's death brought life. Never-ending life to those that would come to him. To those that would bow their knee to him in repentance.

Acknowledging their sin. Saying, God, I am a sinner. Lord, I exchange my life for yours.

Jesus says, because of my death, I'm going to give you life. And in the spiritual world, death to sin and our selfishness brings life. You see, Christ died for sinners.

And when we come to him, the scripture clearly says that the handwriting of sin is blotted out. And that that sin is no more. But then the scripture tells us there is an old man and indwelling sin still in us.

And God says, because I died and you've come to me acknowledging and I've washed away your sin. He says, now I'm going to dwell in you. And now there's going to be two dwelling in you.

There is going to be my Holy Spirit that is going to convict you of that old man in there. And it is going to be your privilege that every time the indwelling Holy Spirit convicts of a sin, the inward sin. Now, I'm talking about the pride.

I'm talking about the sins that grip us and twist and form our mind. I'm talking about deep down where many times we don't even know its presence. God says, I'll be faithful to you.

I will send the Holy Spirit who will convict you of that kind of sin. And he said, in the pit, you're going to come face to face with what motivates you and I. Beloved, it's for our life. So often we walk with Christ and we realize his life is now blocked off.

It's hindered. And God wants an agreement. He wants to say, sin is blocked off in my life and you have gone down to a trickle.

It die. It bringeth forth much fruit. But if it die, it doesn't truly die.

Just die to what's killing it. It died to what keeps it hard and in a shell. It died to what keeps the abundance of fruit and life from bearing in its life.

But if it will die to that, life will spring forward. The seed in the ground, that seed if it could talk and say, this is a dark place. It's a lonely place.

It's a cold place. Would sound like Joseph in the pit, wouldn't it? I was so proud and full of myself, Joseph could say. But then he begins, the word begins to stir him where it says God resists the proud.

That word resist is an enemy, is a warfare term. We resist the enemy. That is battle array.

That's God standing up to make war against the pride in our heart. And beloved, we need to call pride the enemy it is. God says he resists the proud.

He separates. He says the proud he knows from afar. Beloved, does God ever seem like a million miles away? We may have a remedy here.

He drew close to Joseph in the pit because it says he regards the lowly. I believe many suffer from a low-grade depression. A low-grade depression in your life.

And we've known those seasons. But many times I believe it is the turning strong emotions inward and trying to bury it. It's when we take the resentment and anger and jealousy and rebellion.

And we won't call it that. We'll bury it. But we can't bury disease like that.

We can't bury sickness like that. We will break out into a low-grade depression. That will always just be under the surface.

That will always keep us from fully moving into the light. And knowing that breakthrough in Christ. But let us learn from Christ.

Because he says in John 12, 23, The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified. And beloved, that hour he was talking about. That hour of glorification was the hour of his crucifixion.

The hour of his glorification was the hour of his crucifixion. But he knew a glory was going to come upon him in his God-ordained death. He knew there would be a glory upon him.

Because there was a God-ordained death in his life. And beloved, we need to apply a God-ordained death to the root causes of our depression. When we harbor those inward sins.

Joseph's calling was mighty. And so is ours. Death to an outer hard shell.

So that our roots can go deep in Christ. You know, a tree can only go as high as its roots go deep. And Joseph's life is the picture of that tree planted by the river.

That river of God. Where in dying and agreeing to God when the Holy Spirit begins to convict you and I of those things that deep down we struggle with. That we don't want to release.

But if we will, if we will die, if we will say, Jesus, you died for me, and now you live in me. The crucified one lives in you and I. And he will get, if we belong to Christ. And he will give us the power to die to the things that he's asking us to.

Our willingness, beloved, to follow him in this. Our willingness to follow our master so closely to lay down our life also. That his life may flow through us.

That's a life lived sacrificially. That's how Jesus lived. The pit creates a longing, beloved, to shed our life of failure and darkness.

Self-will and selfish plans and pride. It creates a longing to shed that. That's a gift of God.

That's the result of the pit. That's coming face to face with who we are. That's all of a sudden where the visions that God gave us and how we long to use us.

He said, this is the only way they'll be fulfilled. You can have your own plans, your own energy, and how you think you'll get that job done. But he says, no, the truly great in me are brought down to a pit and called to die to the things I'm pointing out to you.

That my life, my life may flow in you. That you may also say, now is the hour of my glory. I've learned to walk a crucified walk.

The glory, glorification comes with the crucifixion. Now, beloved, there's a great deal of difference between being crushed by circumstances and being broken. Many times we feel we are broken because we're in pain.

We feel like, oh, I know what you're talking about. But what we're talking, what can be referred to there as being crushed. Our sin can crush us.

Circumstances can crush us. Things that can cause a heaviness and a depression, where the will to go on, where every step is an effort. That is a crushing, but that is not brokenness.

The brokenness. Joseph could have said, the reason I'm in this pit is my brothers threw me here and I did nothing against them. And I have no reason to be here.

And beloved, that's going to stay in a crushed state of mind. But Joseph, when God visited him in that pit, he began to see this was a God ordained pit to fulfill the call on his life. And it wasn't going to go the way he thought it was going.

And he found a cross in that pit. No men and women that say, God, you break me. You brought me to a place for this reason.

That I can see the need of repentance and forgiveness in my life. Every time I need to. That I will not back away from what you show me that truly goes on in my heart.

And when I need to apply the cross to it, God, the grace will be there and we get free. We cannot obey the gospel. In any measure.

And touch our world the way Joseph touched his world, able to bless Egypt and the household of faith. Unless we will allow God to take us to that pit, to that place of death, to sell where a cross goes upon

those inward sins that God deals with us. But if we will do that, a new man emerges out of the pit, a new woman, a new understanding.

We do emerge knowing how frail and foolish we are. And yet there is a abiding presence of God and prosperity that goes with us. Jay, Joseph went into Egypt, protected and strong, though still a slave.

Joseph went to prison. And though a prisoner knew the favor of God in that place and the mercy of God in that place, those that will come out of the pit, allowing God to do that work and merge new men and women. If we resist the means that God provides to bring us to brokenness.

Beloved, if you're called God, you don't and I won't escape brokenness. We're not going to escape it. This is God's only path to a great faith, to greatness in him.

We're not escaping it. We will make it necessary for God to intensify and prolong the process. But when in our God given separating pit, we open up our heart and we say whatever you have to say.

Whatever you have to do. God, you're teaching me. You are teaching me.

I can say that I'm being trained to surrender to Christ. My will is broken and I'm trained to surrender. And so that was what Joseph's life in a nutshell was about.

And that's why the power and the majesty of God upon him. You see, beloved, he was lifted out of that pit to lead. He was lifted out of that pit to nourish and strengthen his brother in the household of faith.

He was able in himself that God could take him to great heights because he never would take the glory. He knew who he was. God could be seen in him and God be seen through him and God could work through him in incredible ways.

And beloved, God wants to put the same prosperity, the same anointing, the same favor, the same mercy upon us. He wants to lift us to the same places, to the same level of faith. Because Jesus Christ lives, because Jesus Christ died, because Jesus Christ rose again.

You and I have the hope of a Joseph faith, a Joseph walk. But will we follow him to the pit? Will we allow him to take us to the same places? It's a sobering thought. But beloved, it is possible.

I hear God calling. I hear God calling. I hear him saying to a church that has long been labeled all over the world that the Western church is lazy, that the Western church is soaked in materialism, that the Western church lives for herself and nothing else.

But I tell you, in every generation, in every place, God still has a people. God still has a Joseph company. Men and women whose heart can still be stirred, who say, God, I see that the death you're calling me to only brings me life, only brings me freedom, only brings the glory of you in my soul and a sweetness in your presence.

And beloved, we lose the taste for the world. We can be sent into Egypt like Joseph, and it touches us not. That the sensual pleasures of this world, we never find ourselves lying with it.

We get a pure mind and a pure spirit, and we can walk these streets empowered and safe. We go into prison. We can say, my God, my suffering will not last one moment longer than a God-ordained time.

God, I trust you. You will never call me to bear more than I am able. And God, in my suffering, in what you're calling me to go through, if it's a prison time, I'm going to see your favor and your mercy in it.

The prosperity of you is going to be upon me. People are going to say, where do you get that kind of presence and treasure? Joseph was made ruler of the prison house. That prison was not on top of his head.

He had the prison under his feet because it was a God-ordained prison. That's exactly the place, a description where our circumstances don't control us, but we are controlled of the circumstances because our God is with us. We recognize it as God's prison.

And finally, the palace, beloved, can we be trusted with greatness? Can we be trusted with prosperity? Can we be trusted with a blessing? Will God lose us? But with a Joseph anointing, beloved, he joyfully laid down his life. He joyfully sacrificed for others. He was not corrupted by blessing and praise and greatness.

His inward response is, it is not in me what you seek. And that kept him. That inward revelation, that inward powerful truth.

It is not in me. Whom you seek is Jesus Christ. And God is able to use you in a way and use me in a way we never thought able because worked in us is the brokenness of our own frailty and foolishness, but a deeply embedded knowledge.

It is not in me, but it is in him. And when that can be worked in us, we sing a far different song than the world out there. It is a powerful song.

Able to draw a man to him. Able to put something into their life that they don't have. We don't put it there, but they see Christ in us.

Beloved, I have an altar call and I wrote a list of things and God today is asking some of us to wave the white flag of surrender. He's asking us to let him lead us. Because there's a call in your life.

There's a destiny for you, but it's done his way. And as I speak, any of you that feel led, prompted in the annex are here and you say, God, I'm hearing you. I want you to come forward.

But some of the things that the Lord was speaking to me is that if his Holy Spirit was truly present and convicting, there would start to be a deep resistance. That is because something vital is being touched in you and I. But resisting the pit of brokenness would be a strong witness and assurance of the Holy Ghost. I will draw you forward.

I'm going to do something in your life. I'm going to break through. If you would stand the list that the Holy Spirit gave me by no means a conclusive list.

He was saying to me that there were some here. You've been resisting the pit because it meant surrendering will, your will concerning marriage and career. There would be a resistance because you know a wall of pride has been erected that keeps you from making restitution of speaking to the people that you must speak to, of phoning those you must phone.

There's some of you resisting God because God's asking you to sell something and give it to God's work. There's some of you that you are resisting because it would mean confessing your fault one to another. There are some because there's a deep resistance in you to share the gospel where you live and work.

There are some because God is prompting you to cancel divorce proceedings. God is telling you move away from this other person. There are some here there's a deep resistance because you're afraid of what God would speak to you.

There are some here that have never submitted to Jesus Christ. You think you have, but you're hearing for the first time that when you submit to him he's going to ask to be Lord and Savior. But beloved if we will run head on to what pride and sin is trying to keep us from, if we are going to say Lord you can lead me down into that pit for I want all you have for me.

I want to live my life on the plane of like a Joseph company where you lead I will follow knowing an abiding strength because I went to the pit first. I faced what you were trying to say to me. And Lord you showed me how to apply a cross to every indwelling sin that raises its head to trouble me that I don't want to call sin.

But beloved today God is saying come, come. He's going to put his hand on people and call them Joseph. Beloved if the Holy Spirit is speaking to your heart and continues to speak to you you're welcome to stay here.

You're welcome to stay at the altar, the sanctuary and spend some time in prayer before the Lord. We meet again at six o'clock this evening for a time of worship and the word of God again for our Sunday evening service. Between now and then we're just going to play some music softly for five minutes or so.

If you have to go you may greet your neighbors as we leave today. But for those who want to stay and pray we invite you to do that with us. Father we just thank you so much for this word.

Thank you Holy Spirit for how you are so gently probing very deeply into our hearts and challenging us. The very motives of why we seek you and why we pray and where do we really want to go with you. And Jesus all we can say is that God we do want you.

We want your kingdom. We want your power and your presence. And wherever you have to take us you will take us that that becomes a reality in all of our lives.

My God we thank you for this word today. Thank you Lord for the clarity, the anointing, the touch of heaven. Father we give you the praise and all the glory in Jesus mighty name.

Amen. God bless you. We'll see you either next week or we'll see you at six o'clock.

This is the conclusion of the message.

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